[76 cont.]

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775 We can say that in La Guajira among the spirits of the dead there are categories determined by capacity to work evil. Spirits in general are indifferent as long as the established norms regarding their treatment are not violated, such as the fulfillment of the post-mortem ceremonial, avoidance of the use of [762] their names, etc. But when the spirit is that of a suicide, then his standing as an author of evil grows, as the fact of his having violated the established social order places him automatically at the margin of the community: he is a social outcast even in the world of the dead, and his spirit does not wander around as the others do but face downward and at ground level; for this reason he is considered an enemy of the community.

773 A Guajiro legend regarding Kasétamána Hill relates that •823 in remote times there was a majayura ("a young woman") who 762 had sexual relations with her father and became pregnant. According to the legend, on finding herself in this condition, she was so ashamed that she wanted to wipe out her social sin by hanging herself, which she did. Mareiwa, the god of the Guajiro, told her that as punishment for her offense he would change her into a hill. For this reason, say the Indians, Kasétamána Hill has the shape of a hanged woman. Ever since, concludes the story, Indians frequently hang themselves when any adverse event disturbs their lives.

762 As the legend transcribed above will indicate, an Indian 775 commits suicide when he cannot carry out some act which is at variance with the established patterns of his family circle or of society in general. Since he cannot be punished for the violation when alive, he must pay the penalty after his death. It is his spirit which receives and feels the consequences of the social sin he has committed. For this reason the general belief to which we have already alluded exists that the spirit of the suicide always wanders face downward and at ground level in the regions of the dead. [77]

762 But if the punishment of the suicide cannot be inflicted on 768 the individual himself while alive, it can, on the other hand, be 672

[100 cont.]
also effective on birds, which die in a short time when they have the evil eye put on them. To protect the children they are made to wear rings or bracelets made of jet beads, buzzard [chulo] bones, guache [a certain serpent] teeth, or male and female coral stones. They also avert the evil eye by singing three hymns over the sufferer.

"We also find this superstition in Spain. The physician Rodrigues López, referring to Galician superstitions, writes: 'Here, where the belief in the evil eye is so strongly held, it is exceptional for a mother not to hang round her child's neck certain relics, herbs, bones, or other objects of all shapes and sizes, or at other times to sew them on to their children's clothes, or tie them to their wrists to protect them from the contagious effects of the evil eye.'" (60)

60. Arias, Juan de Dios. Supersticiones Populares [Popular Superstitions], pp. 265-266.

Besides this, in the study made by the Licentiate Panesso Robledo on Antiochian folklore we find the following:

"Not only country people but also city dwellers wear opals, nearly all imitation, to protect themselves from evil actions, and on their children's wrists they tie black beads, called jet but rarely genuine, to keep them safe from the evil eye, a universal superstition whose effects if they really occur are to be imputed to the phenomena of auto-suggestion or hypnotism." (61)

61. Panesso R., Antonio. Del Folklore Antioqueño [Antioquian Folklore], p. 25.

Leaving Colombian folklore and limiting ourselves to that of La Guajira, we find there that jet is the best charm to protect one from the evil eye, [101] which especially affects children. This evil effect is not obtained if the person on whom it is practiced carries jet on his person, since it has the property of counteracting the evil. According to the belief, when the evil eye has been cast upon a person carrying a piece of jet, this

751 [101 cont.]
823 breaks, thus counteracting the evil. In other words, the magic
855 action of the eyes is deviated toward the jet, which directly re-
754 ceives the effect, so liberating its owner from it.

For the same purpose they also use a mineral called salta piedra ["jumping stone"], which is hung by a string from children's wrists. It is yellow and shining.

Pieces of coral, which the women use in their necklaces, [111] bracelets, and anklets as ornaments and bringers of happiness, health, and good fortune, are suspended from children's wrists to forestall the evil eye and some other sicknesses. The mestizos who live in La Guajira wear it attached to their waists by means of a cord.

751 It is also very common to find, as a preventative of this
754 evil, "oxeye" seeds hung by a small cotton string from some
824 part of the body.

Also coconut shell in the shape of a little hand is frequently seen, a shape which is probably more effective made in jet.

754 The evil eye, according to native belief, is exercised by certain people who have a special power in their eyes which causes sickness in those they look at if these are weak, such as children and sick persons, but this harmful action is involuntary in the majority of cases, though some do knowingly use their power and put it into practice with the manifest intention of causing evil. The effects of these "eyes" also extends to plants and animals.

The sickness shows itself in the form of stomach troubles, diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and by general eruptions on the skin. Animals also sicken and die, and plants cease to develop naturally and in the end dry up.

751 Method of warding off the wanurú. Near native habita-
825 tions the owners place horses' skulls, which they say serve to drive off sickness both in children and adults, as they have the effect of frightening away the wanurú. We believe that this attitude is closely allied to another native belief which convinces them that the neighing of horses frightens the spirits that [484] wander on the roads at night. For this reason, when the Indians travel at night, as we saw personally, the horsemen always [102]

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13



neither was much help. Our route went in a zig-zag from water hole to water hole. I did not feel altogether sure that the Gaffer would find the mission station. From what I could understand of the interpreter's inadequate Spanish and floods of Guajiro, it seemed that when the old man made his trip to the Macuira Hills, there was not yet a mission station there. I knew that it was of relatively recent date. If we could only get to Macuira, we could ask our way to the monks, I felt sure of that. Otherwise we should have to try and find our way to the little harbour of Puerto Estrella on the east coast of the peninsula. To go there involved a detour, but there would certainly be a white person or at least a mestizo there, who would be able to show us the way to Amúruru.

It seemed to us that our baquiano not only wandered round in search of water holes, but also avoided certain ranchos. What, we wondered, was the position with his clan? Was it engaged in a feud just then? I knew little of clan quarrels and blood-feuds, then.

The Gaffer now began asking everyone we met the way to Macuira. It was obvious that he did not know where he was and that we had a bad guide. The Guajiro have a wonderful sense of direction. They find their way unerringly about their trackless cactus steppes, where every place looks alike. They know every depression in the ground, every eminence, and they all have names. Like the Arabs in the desert, they never forget a way they have once travelled, so it was obvious that the Gaffer had never before been where we were then, that he had simply gone astray. The Indians' ability to follow tracks is also amazing. They can see by the hoof prints when a strange horse has been in among a herd, and they can track down a strayed bullock, even if it has joined company with others. An Indian can see whether others belong to his clan or not from a long distance off, even when he does not know them personally. They have a clan mark tattooed, or sometimes painted on their thighs, it is true, but an Indian seems to know to which clan they belong, even when you cannot distinguish those marks through field glasses.